**Farm visits and Secondary Geography:** *How could connections with and visits to local farms enrich learning?*

*This list of ideas has been put together to try and give teachers some ideas for how connections with and visits to local farms might enrich learning in Secondary Geography.*

Key Stage 3

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Subject content** | **Ideas for how connections with local farms can enrich learning** |
| Geographical skills: GIS, OS maps, topographical and other thematic mapping, diagrams, aerial photographs | * Learn how farmers make use of GIS * Study site and situation of a local farm using OS maps * Use OS maps to navigate around a farm * Create thematic maps to show different land uses on a farm * Use diagrams to understand the farming system * Annotate aerial photographs of a farm to show different land uses |
| Key processes in rocks, weathering and soils | * Hear from farmers about the importance of soil for arable farming * Find out about how farmers use and influence soil processes. |
| Economic activity in the primary sector | * Hear from farmers about the economic side of farming – including input costs, employment, farm outputs and diversification. * Hear direct from farmers about the value of agriculture to the economy. |
| How physical and human processes interact to influence and change landscapes, environments and the climate and how human activity relies on effective functioning of natural systems. | * Understand how and why the farm landscape has changed over time * Hear from farmers about positive and negative impacts of farming on the environment * Learn about how the sustainability of a farm requires natural systems (such as soil processes) to function effectively |
| Fieldwork in contrasting locations | * Carry out fieldwork tasks – e.g. land use surveys, interviews infiltration rates. |

GCSE  
The most obvious connection within GSCE geography is to the Food option within the ‘Resources and their management’ section of the course. The examples given in italics are all taken from the AQA specification.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Subject content** | **Ideas for how connections with local farms can enrich learning** |
| An overview of how humans use, modify and change ecosystems and environments in order to obtain food | * Learn from farmers about how they use the ecosystem (e.g. soil, climate, water) in order to produce food * Learn about how farmers have modified the ecosystem (e.g. clearing forest, planting hedgerows, crop rotation) in order to produce food. |
| Changing characteristics of demand and supply of food | * Learn from farmers about how they think demand for food has changed over time (including changes in relation to volume, cost, seasonality, local/international, organic etc). * Learn from farmers about how the way in which they think ‘supply’ food has changed over time (e.g. changes to methods of production, changes in yields. * Learn from farmers about factors affecting supply of food *(e.g. climate, technology, pests and disease, water stress, conflict, poverty)* |
| Impacts of human intervention in relation to supply of food | * Find out about impacts of intervention to increase food supply *– (e.g. irrigation, aeroponics and hydroponics, the new green revolution and use of biotechnology, appropriate technology)*. * Learn from farmers about advantages and disadvantages of specific agricultural developments. |
| Sustainable use/management of food | * Learn about efforts to increase sustainability within the food/farming system *(e.g. organic farming, permaculture, urban farming initiatives, fish and meat from sustainable sources, seasonal food consumption, reduced waste and losses).* |
| Changing weather and climate – consequences of extreme weather | * Use of farming/agriculture to illustrate impacts of extreme weather in UK |
| Climate Change - responses | * Examples of how agriculture is adapting to climate change |
| Fieldwork project that show interaction between human and physical geography | * Study influence of different types of farming on infiltration rates. |

A level

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Subject content** | **Ideas for how connections with local farms can enrich learning** |
| Carbon cycles: photosynthesis, decomposition, land use change | * Use an arable farm as a way of illustrating the carbon cycle on a small scale. * Consider how bio-fuels grown on farms impact upon the carbon cycle. * Understand how changes in land use (e.g. forest-farmland) would change the carbon cycle. |
| Water cycles: runoff, water extraction, evaporation | * Understand how the water cycle at a local level influences agriculture. * Study infiltration within water cycle though fieldwork. * Understand how changes to groundwater supplies occur at a local level. |
| Changing place : changing demographics and cultural characteristic | * Consider how farming influences (or not) changing demographics and cultural characteristics of a place (e.g. Seasonal workforce, migrant labour) |
| Changing place: economic change and social inequality | * Explore changing role of farming/agriculture in terms of its value for local economy and significance in terms of sense of place within a locality. |
| Changing place : food production, circulation and consumption | * Understand local patterns of food production, circulation and consumption. |
| Changing place: lived experience of place in the past and present | * Use interviews/case studies of farming families to find out about how lived experience of place has changed over time. |
| Geographical skills and Fieldwork (4 day requirement). | * Compare infiltration rates in areas of a farm with different relief/crop type/other land-use. * Questionnaires in local area around perception of importance of local agriculture in creating sense of place. |

*This has been compiled by a Secondary Geography Teacher and FACE Trustee- Helen Cox. Please contact* [*hcox@sjl.herts.sch.uk*](mailto:hcox@sjl.herts.sch.uk) *with any further ideas – this is a work in progress!*